

BREAKING DOWN A GENERAL COLLECTION OF GREAT BRITAIN PERFINS.

By Dr. R. W. Powell, F.R.P.S.,L.

I am getting much satisfaction from my latest development in perfin collecting, and feel that this should be shared with others. But first, perhaps I should indicate how things started and have developed. I had specialised mainly in the GB definitive stamps of late QV and the following reigns, and, on retirement I extended to certain postmarks and to perfins. For the perfins I use Hagner type sheets which facilitate changes and the slipping in of different stamps having the same perfin. Perfin patterns that undergo a distinct but small charge at a definite time are accepted as different types, but others with small differences confined to one period are more likely to come from a multi-head.

All this was fun, and my type total rose to about fifteen thousand.

Then came Richard L. Mewhinney's Catalog of the Perfins of Ireland, which led me to remove the examples shown from my collection when found to have Irish postmarks, plus several others thought to qualify for inclusion. A year or two later Dr. Tony Edwards provided a Catalogue of Welsh perfins, so the perfins on Welsh Regional stamps and those with Welsh cancellations were treated similarly. Much fun was had, as well as the satisfaction of seeing my article 'Welsh Perfins as a Side Collection' on the front cover of The Perfins Bulletin for March 1987 (Volume 40 page 33).

Meanwhile, I had been reflecting on the 1985 Census of Worldwide Perfin Patterns conducted by the Perfins Club and its Results (Volume 38, page 144, September 1985). For each country they had wanted pattern numbers under three headings, Post (15547), Rev (197) and Sta (29). These headings were for patterns on postage stamps, on revenue stamps and on postal stationery, and the numbers that follow in brackets are the highest counts received. I decided that my collection ought to be broken down in like manner.

Postal Stationery was easy to separate and gave a total of 32 items from post cards, envelopes, wrappers and two patterns perforated through the flaps of Registered envelopes. Only items were included where the perfin penetrated the base on which the stamp was printed. Thus the Souvenir Letter Card issued by the Stamp Collecting Promotion Council in 1977 did not qualify for inclusion.

For the revenue stamps things are not so clear cut. With most countries there are clear differences between their postage and revenue stamps as it was in Great Britain until the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1881, which required the production of stamps that could be used for either postal or revenue purposes. On 12 July 1881 the 1d lilac was issued, which had been specially designed for the dual usage. Not only was the inscription 'Postage and Inland Revenue', but the purple ink was doubly fugitive, which made both postmarks and ink signatures etc., difficult to remove without seriously affecting the colour. After that time no more stamps inscribed 'Inland Revenue' were issued. Telegraph stamps were treated similarly, but for a time, stocks in hand could be used for either purposes

Stamps up to the value of 2s 6d soon followed with the 'Postage & Revenue' inscription, and those bought in quantity were oftentimes perforated as a security measure. Other, notably at first the 1d and 6d values were overprinted to serve also on receipts. The overprinting forfeited their availability for postal use, whereas there were no restrictions on the use of perforated stamps. It is only of the perfinns with which I will now deal.

Most perfin collections will contain a few without postmarks that have been soaked from fiscal documents. I have been through my general collection and have removed these. Most have been recognised by their manuscript cancellation, or by some non-postal printed receipt such as that of a Borough Council, a Bank or an Assurance or other Society. These have now been mounted up as a separate collection, and this has found a place to include the few complete receipts, cheques and so on that also carry perforated stamps. A receipt of the Anglo-American Oil Co., Ltd., Royston Depot is of interest, in that the 1d K.E.VII has the full-name perfin NASH (N 12A). I understand that Buntingford had a firm of solicitors, named Nash, who were probably receiving the 100 gal. of "Royal Daylight" oil. This perfin could not be photocopied, but Figures 1a and 1b show front and back views of another used by "Barker's of Kensington". This perfin differs from the four given in Tilles for this firm. It incorporates a date, 29 16, and suggests that some listed numerical perfinns could have come from similar sources. This stamp is also unusual in that it bears an overprint "Received for John Barker Co., Ltd." as well as being perforated, whilst the '2' matches 0160.02 of our latest Numbers list, so, according to the heading is a fiscal partial and should not have been recorded.

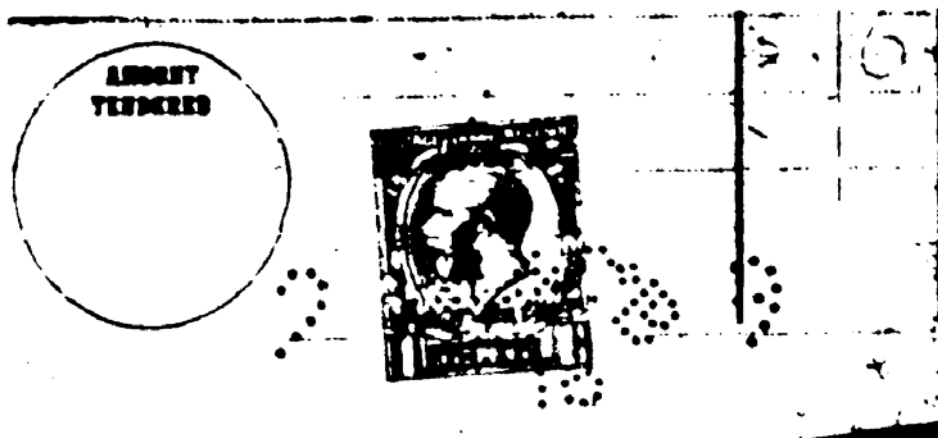


Fig. 1a.



Figures 2a and b, 3a and b and 4a and b show the three further examples I possess with overprints as well as perfin. Their overprints are "Westminster Bank Limited, Foreign Branch", "A. Sanderson & Sons, Ltd" and "Received V S & Co Ltd.", whilst the perfins are the "1" of a date, ".& S L" of a perfin covering more than a single stamp for its revenue use, and one matching the Tilles V 160.1 that had postal use for Messrs. Vyse, Sons and Co., Ltd from KGV to KGV1.



Fig.2a.

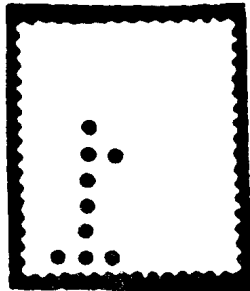


Fig.2b.



Fig.3a.

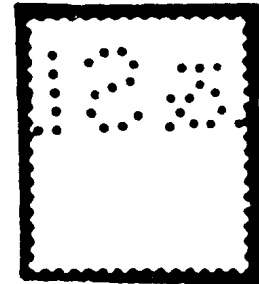


Fig.3b.



Fig.4a.



Fig.4b.

A few other perfins designed for fiscal use were too large for single definitives, as seen in Figures 5a and b. The inclined word "RATES" perfined on the stamps of Figures 6a and b was clearly intended for fiscal use as in 6b, but 6a is postally used by IPSWICH, which serves to confirm Ipswich as the rating authority. (Illustrations overleaf).

Continued/



Fig. 5a.

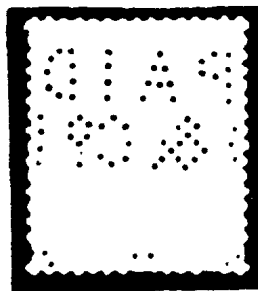


Fig. 5b.



Fig. 6a.



Fig. 6b.

A less usual group that now finds a home in my collection of perfin stamps having other than postal use are some KEVII stamps cancelled by the word "EXAMINED" and having various perfins of the Great Northern Railway. Purple ink has been used for the word EXAMINED, which is seen to cover the four penny stamps of Figure 7a, whilst Figure 7b shows the perfin to be G 370.1 (3700.01). Furthermore the small differences in the individual patterns suggest the use of a multi-head device.



Fig. 7a.

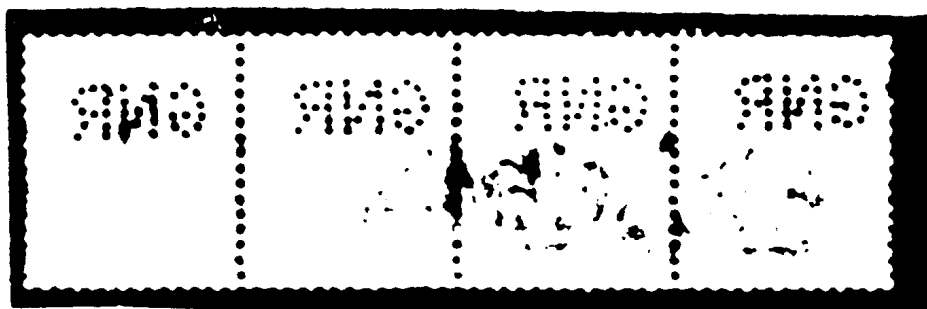


Fig. 7b.

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Dr. R. W. Powell FRPS,L

(Reprinted from the *Perfin Society's Bulletin*, April 1988, by kind permission of its editor).

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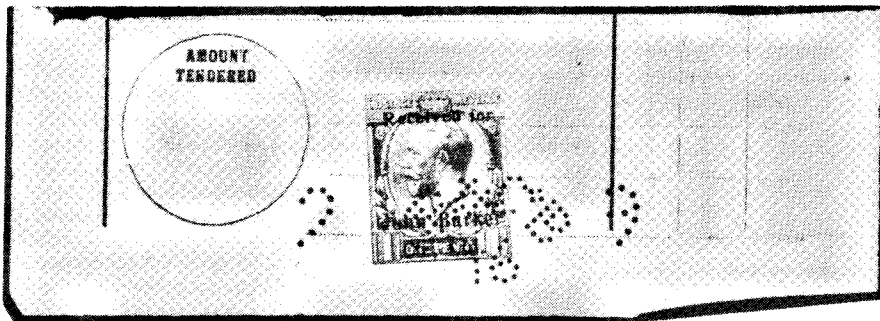


Fig. 1a



Fig. 1b



Fig. 2a

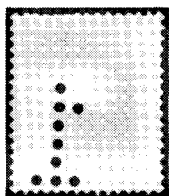


Fig. 2b



Fig. 3a

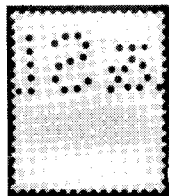


Fig. 3b



Fig. 4a

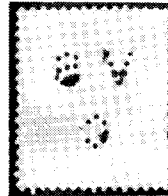


Fig. 4b



Fig. 5a

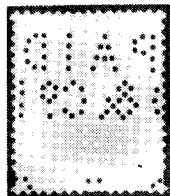


Fig. 5b



Fig. 7a



Fig. 6a



Fig. 6b

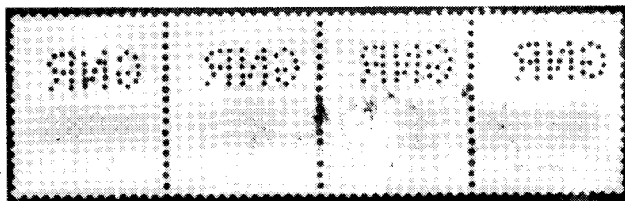


Fig. 7b

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* The type references are those given in "The Perfins of Great Britain, a catalogue album" compiled by Robert McKee & B. Tompkins. Published in 1975 by Harvey Tilles.



Fig. 8a

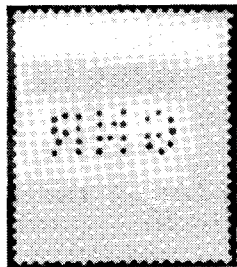


Fig. 8b



Fig. 10a

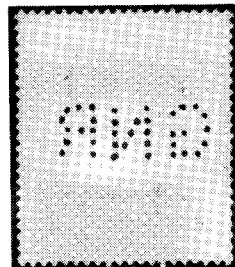


Fig. 10b



Fig. 9a

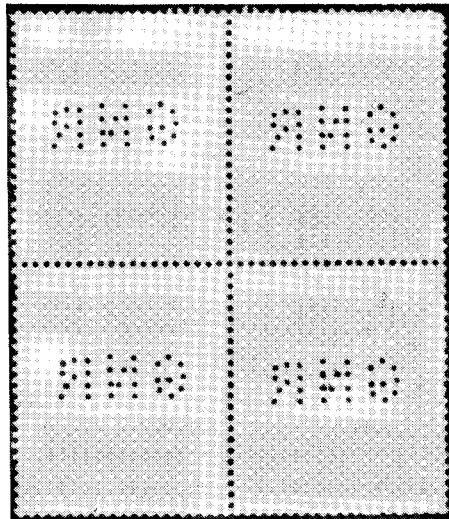


Fig. 9b

perfins. Their overprints are "Westminster Bank Limited, Foreign Branch", "A. Sanderson & Sons, Ltd" and "Received V S & Co Ltd.", whilst the perfins are the "1" of a date, ". & S L" of a perfin covering more than a single stamp for its revenue use, and one matching the Tilles V 160.1 that had postal use for Messrs. Vyse, Sons and Co., Ltd. from KGV to KGV1.

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Figure 8a shows a half-crown Edward of the De La Rue printing with a similar cancellation and a different perfin as seen in Figure 8b. This seems to be of an unlisted type, which matches each of the four patterns seen in Figure 9 for a block of the same stamp, so is presumably a single headed die. The stamp of Figure 10a is from the later Somerset House printing, and its perfin of Figure 10b is seen to be yet another type not to be found in our catalogues, not even in that of the Perfin Society issued late in 1987.

As a return for bringing these new perfins to the notice of Railway Specialists, maybe one of them can enlighten me as to when and why the "EXAMINED" cancellation was used by this Railway Company.

The 'PAC' perfin P 12.4 is one of nine patterns attributed in the Tilles Catalogue to The Prudential Assurance Co., Ltd. Following my acquisition of an envelope dated April 9 1932 and bearing this perfin, but with the name "Pearl Assurance Co. Ltd. High Holborn, London, W.C.1." printed on its flap, I had a note on same in Volume 37, p. 110, June 1984 of The Perfins Bulletin, so was pleased to find that further corroborating evidence could be included in my present revenue perfins collection. Shown in Figure 11 is a

PEARL ASSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED,

Chief Offices:—HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1.

Pol. No. TPG.110010

PUBLIC

~~EMPLOYERS~~ LIABILITY INSURANCE

DB.

Received the 22nd day of February 1938, of
Mr. H. P. Curtis t/a F. Curtis & Sons the sum of £ 6 : 1 : 9 to adjust
the Premium under the above-mentioned Policy for the year ending 3rd December, 1937,
in accordance with the Premium Adjustment Form
~~Declaration of Wages~~ made by the Insured pursuant to Condition 5 of the
Policy.

£ 6 : 1 : 9

H H Austin
Managing Director.

No Receipts are valid but those printed and issued from the Chief Office, with Director's Signature and Countersigned
by an Agent of the Company

Division P.15/H. Curtis.
District.

Countersigned



Bo.

A. 2,000-4-37.—Form No. A 219.

Fig. 11

receipt of The Pearl Assurance Company Ltd., dated February 22 1938 and having a countersigned copy of the 2d photogravure stamp with the PAC perfin of P 12.4.

Most of the perfins in my revenue collection are of the listed types that are normally used postally, but my latest development adds a new zest to my checking over perfin buys and packets. I am now pleased if these contain a few new types showing fiscal use. In November 1987, I took my newest collection to the London meeting of the Perfins Society, and was soon rewarded by a new

finding. Dr. Tony Edwards spotted the item now shown as Figure 12a, where the letters JT/S showed that a machine of the Poko type had been used for its production. We wondered how a perforating and affixing machine of this type could have been used for revenue documents rather than for envelopes, but reached no decision.

The 2d stamp of the 1924 issue certainly has part of a signature, but Figure 12b may show an unusual feature that may offer a clue. Several of the discs of paper removed during perforating are adhering just below the holes from which they have come. Had the accounts office of Messrs. Joseph Terry and Sons been short of normal sheet stamps, and solved their need with stamps fed from the hand Poko machine? Perhaps a reader, who has knowledge of the operation of these machines, can help with this problem? What other perfins from GB Poko's are known with revenue usage?

My collection of perfins with revenue usage of the stamps of Great Britain at present numbers 539 with 444 coming from those also intended to have postal use.

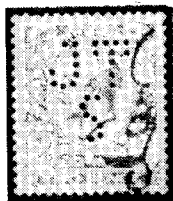


Fig. 12a

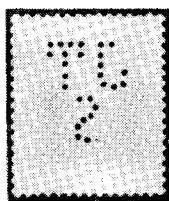


Fig. 12b